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Strategies for English Learning in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract
This study aims to explore the urgency of English language skills in early childhood through English language learning strategies for early childhood education in the modern era. Focus is given to sensitive periods in child development that indicate optimal potential in language learning. The research identifies that various aspects of language should be introduced to children before age 8, when children's brain development reaches 80%. In order to maximize this period, learning strategies that motivate and boost the spirit of learning are proposed, especially in the context of English language teaching. The TPR (Total Physical Response) method, stories and songs are identified as effective and fun methods in teaching English to young children. By utilizing the everyday environment, both at school and at home, children can continue to enrich their understanding of language. Close collaboration between educators and parents is also highlighted as an important aspect in optimizing language learning. This research makes a valuable contribution in directing English language learning approaches that suit the characteristics and potential of early childhood.

Keywords: *English Learning, Learning Strategies, Early Childhood Education*

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education plays a crucial role in forming the basis of children's intellectual, emotional and social development (Kartikawati, Roni, & Purwanti, 2022). In an increasingly connected era of globalization, the ability to communicate in English has become a necessity. English, as an international language, serves not only as a cross-cultural communication tool, but also as a door of access to global educational, professional and collaboration opportunities (Sari, Utama, Suhono, & Yawisah, 2019). Therefore, introducing children to English early has profound implications for their future development (Suhono, Pratiwi, Ariyanto, & Lala, 2022). However, organizing English learning for young children is not an easy task. Unlike older children, young children are at a unique stage of development, with specific cognitive, emotional and physical characteristics (Kholid, Suhono, & Noviyandi, 2020). They have a great capacity to absorb information and skills, but also require learning approaches that are tailored to their playful and explorative world (Nur Tanfidiyah & Ferdian Utama, 2019).

Nowadays, it has become common for people to use English, especially children, because children have fresh thinking abilities (Ramdhani & Dea, 2021). Children also learn from interesting experiences. They are happy with a game that is fun as stated in Hamid's book (2012: 18-19) that playing with a pleasant atmosphere is a very important factor in education. Huizinga states that play and fun are essential activities for all humans. In positive psychology theorists, such as Csiszentmihalyi (1998) explain in flow theory that human beings can do anything in the best way, if they are able to engage totally in fun activities (Wahyuni & Azizah, 2020). Suyanto (2005: 6) says that during the golden age children experience very rapid growth and development and are irreplaceable in the future. According to various studies in the field of neurology, it is proven that 50% of children's intelligence is formed within the first 4 years (Williams, Park, & Breazeal, 2019). After the child is 8 years old his brain development reaches 80% and at age 18 years reaches 100%.

Therefore, designing learning strategies that are fun for children is mandatory for teachers or teachers who lead to learning in early childhood (Utama, 2017). Through learning and teaching activities, teachers help the process of acquiring a second language (a language other than the mother tongue). For example: L1 Indonesian and L2 English in the modern era many advances in technology use English and increasingly fierce competition, demanding that we be able to master English which is an international language (Kidd & Garcia, n.d.). Therefore, English education needs to be introduced. On the other hand, learning strategies require teacher creativity to organize all learning preparations, in order to achieve teaching and learning objectives that encourage students' motivation to be enthusiastic about the lessons given (Cloudia Ho, 2020). As is the case in English lessons for early childhood, where the teacher must have the ability to change the learning atmosphere that was bored to be more fun. So that they more easily acquire the knowledge provided. Today, it is known that many English teachers or instructors who can teach adults who are serious but lose the way to create a fun classroom atmosphere to teach English lessons to young children, and also take advantage of their cognitive development (Suleiman, Magableh, & Abdullah, 2020). By learning foreign languages, especially English, which is fun for early childhood. Therefore, the author raises the title of "English Learning Strategies for Early Childhood Education" so that readers can take advantage of children's rapidly developing cognitive and apply it in teaching English that is good and fun for them.

A fundamental issue in this context is the development of appropriate and effective English language learning strategies for early childhood. These strategies must be able to address the various challenges that arise, including differences in cognitive development, variations in motivation and interest, and the selection of appropriate learning methods (d'Angelo, Savulich, & Sahakian, 2017). In addition, technological advances and digitalization have also brought about a change in the educational paradigm, allowing for the integration of technology as a learning tool, but also requiring careful thought on how technology can be used to enhance English language learning for early childhood. This research aims to explore the issue of English language learning strategies for early childhood. Through an in-depth analysis of early childhood development, motivational factors, and effective learning approaches, this research is expected to provide valuable insights for educators, practitioners, and stakeholders in designing learning environments that support the development of optimal English language skills.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is the library research method, which is often referred to as library research. This method focuses on collecting and analyzing data from various sources of literature relevant to the research topic, in this case, English learning strategies for early childhood education. Through the identification of data sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, and research reports related to early childhood education, English language learning, learning methods, and child development, this research gained a strong foundation to explore in-depth information. Data collection was done by conducting a careful search using keywords relevant to the research topic. Relevant information from various literature sources was then collected and organized according to the main themes that emerged. The data included relevant learning theories, aspects of early childhood cognitive and emotional development, as well as previous studies on the implementation of English language learning strategies in early childhood (Connaway, L. S., & Radford, 2021).

Data analysis was conducted by formulating common patterns, trends and findings that emerged from the collected literature. The results of this analysis will be interpreted to gain a deeper understanding of the most appropriate and effective English language learning strategies in the context of early childhood education. The findings will also be linked to relevant theories of education, child development and psychology to gain a more comprehensive understanding. The results of this research will be compiled in the form of a research report that covers all important aspects of the library research method that has been conducted, from the introduction, identification of data sources, data collection and analysis, to the interpretation of results and practical implications. Although there are limitations in this research, such as the limited data obtained from existing literature, the library research method remains a powerful tool in exploring insights and knowledge about English learning strategies for early childhood education (Trkov et al., 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Lesson Planning

Learning comes from the basic word "learning" which means a process, way, action so that people or students learn and gain knowledge. So the word learning is a teaching and learning process (PBM) which is an integration of teacher activities as a teacher and student activities as a learner so that there is mutual interaction between the two in an instructional situation that is teaching. By definition, planning is the whole process of thinking and determining all activities that will be carried out in the future in order to achieve goals (Apriyanti, 2017). Learning planning is an effort in the teaching and learning process that is thought out and determined in the next lesson so that it can lead to a good interaction and students can gain knowledge and knowledge that is taught. In line with this concept Prabowo and Nurmaliyah (2010:2) that the application of planning activities in learning activities is an effort to determine the various activities that will be carried out in relation to efforts to achieve the objectives of the learning process (Rusydi Ananda, 2019).

Learning planning is the initial stage in the process of developing and implementing learning. In education, learning planning is a systematic process for planning effective and efficient learning activities so that learning objectives can be achieved properly. Here are some theories that underlie learning planning:

1. Constructivism Theory
   Constructivism theory emphasizes that learning should be built upon the experiences, knowledge and understanding that students already have. Learning planning based on constructivism will focus on creating learning situations that stimulate students to actively think, discuss, and build their own knowledge through interaction with learning materials.
2. Behaviorism Theory
   Behaviourism theory argues that behavior can be learned through responses to external stimuli. In behaviorism-based learning planning, learning objectives must be clearly formulated, and learning methods involve giving appropriate stimuli or punishments to influence student behavior.
3. Cognitivism Theory
   Cognitivism theory emphasizes that learning involves processing information in students' minds. In lesson planning based on this theory, it is necessary to pay attention to how information is presented, organized, and connected so that students can better understand and process knowledge.
4. Social Constructivism Theory
   This theory combines aspects of constructivism with social interaction in learning. Lesson planning based on social constructivism theory will emphasize the importance of collaboration between students, group discussions, and assignments that require interaction and cooperation.
5. Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory
   Howard Gardner proposed this theory and argues that individuals have various types of intelligence. In MI-based learning planning, teachers must design learning activities that facilitate the development of all types of intelligence students possess.
6. Andragogy Theory (Adult Learning)
   This theory emphasizes the difference between children and adult learning. In planning adult learning, teachers should consider life experiences, internal motivation, and active involvement in the learning process.
7. Bloom's Taxonomy Theory
   Bloom's Taxonomy classifies learning objectives into cognitive levels, ranging from knowledge to analysis, evaluation and creation. Bloom's Taxonomy-based lesson planning helps teachers design activities that support the development of different levels of students' cognitive abilities.

In lesson planning, it is important to consider learners' characteristics, learning objectives, teaching methods, as well as appropriate assessment methods. Combining principles from the various theories above can help teachers design effective learning that meets the needs of students. In lesson planning for early childhood education, a particularly relevant approach is the theory of constructivism. This theory emphasizes that children do not just passively receive knowledge, but they are actively involved in constructing their own understanding through interaction with the surrounding environment. In this context, teachers can plan learning by creating environments that stimulate exploration and interaction. For example, by providing manipulative materials such as building blocks, creative toys or natural materials, children can actively try, arrange and combine these materials to build an understanding of concepts such as shape, space and number. By supporting this exploration, teachers

provide opportunities for children to act as builders of their own knowledge, in line with the principles of constructivism.

In a constructivist approach, teachers also act as facilitators who help children in their learning process. Teachers can ask open-ended questions to stimulate critical thinking and stimulate small group discussions where children can share their understanding with each other. Through this social interaction, children can expand their views and build knowledge collaboratively. By planning lessons based on constructivism theory, educators can create learning experiences that are child-centered, generate their interest and engagement, and support balanced cognitive, social and emotional development.

English Learning Strategies for Early Childhood Education

TPR Method (Total Physical Response Method)

According to Richards TPR is defined as "a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity". So the TPR (Total Physical Response) method is a language learning method that is structured on the coordination of commands, speech and action; and seeks to teach language through physical (motor) activity. Meanwhile, according to Larsen and Diane in Technique and Principles in Language Teaching, TPR or also called "the comprehension approach" is a method of approaching foreign languages with instructions or commands. Developed by James Asher, a psychology professor at San Jose State University in California. The method is suitable for teaching English in early childhood where learning prioritizes direct activities related to physical activities (physical) and movement (movement).

In the TPR method, Asher says that the more often or the more intensive a person's memory is stimulated, the stronger the associated memory association and the easier it is to remember (recalling). This recalling activity is done verbally with motor activity. Furthermore, Asher also concluded that the role of emotional factors is very effective in children's language learning, meaning that learning language by involving games with movement that can be combined with singing or storytelling will be able to reduce the pressure of learning one's language. He believes that the joy in the child (positive mood) will positively impact the child's language learning. Examples of activities with this method: Examples of learning with this method are as follows: when introducing the word stand up, all children stand up while listening to the word stand up and speaking the word stand up. Here we do not need to emphasize the introduction of written language, although we can occasionally write the word, it is not necessary. Then we can reinforce the word recognition while singing and moving according to the song commands.

Everybody sit down, sit down, sit down
Everyone sit down, just like me
Everybody stand up, stand up, stand up
Everyone stand up, just like me

Teaching English by Using Song

English language learning using songs is one method or way of teaching English by using singing or songs as the media. Given that English is a foreign language in Indonesia, the learning process requires an appropriate and effective approach. The success of English language learning in early childhood is greatly

influenced by a teacher's ability to present an interesting and enjoyable teaching and learning process for children. In line with the existence of a child who likes to sing and move, movement and song are one of the most appropriate approaches if used to present the English learning process in early childhood. Presenting an interesting and fun learning process for children by not leaving good and correct English language rules. Music can enrich spiritual life and provide a balance of life for children. Through music, humans can express their thoughts and feelings and control their emotions. Singing is part of music. Singing serves as a tool to pour out thoughts and feelings to communicate.

In essence, singing for children is as:

1. Emotional language, where with singing children can express their feelings, feelings of pleasure, funny, amazement, emotion.
2. Tonal Language, because songs can be heard, can be sung, and communicated.
3. The Language of Movement, the movement in songs is reflected in the rhythm (regular movements/beats), in the rhythm (long short, irregular movements/beats), and in the melody (high and low movements).

Based on the experience of English teachers and according to linguists as stated by Abdulrahman Al-Faridi English songs can help teachers to create active, creative and fun learning. Singing and music are used as techniques in the English learning process. Music, which has various elements in it, can be used as a form of facility to develop children's cognitive abilities. Changes in the rhythm of the music train children to distinguish their inner rhythm as well as their motor skills (for example, when combined with movement exercises according to the lyrics).

Teaching English by Using Games

It is a learning approach that involves using different types of games as tools to teach and reinforce English language skills in students, especially young children. This method takes advantage of the interactive, fun, and challenging nature of games to create an engaging and effective learning environment. In this strategy, games are adapted in such a way that students engage in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English. The games can be board games, card games, moving games, and the like. The main objective is to create a natural and meaningful situation for students to use English, both in communicating with the teacher and with classmates.

The advantage of this strategy is two-fold. First, games help to relieve the sense of tension or anxiety in learning English and create a relaxed learning atmosphere. Secondly, games engage students actively in healthy interaction and competition, which in turn increases their motivation to learn as well as their engagement in the learning process. Some examples of games that can be used include role-playing, charades, vocabulary bingo or team-based games. Teachers can integrate a competitive element by awarding points or prizes to teams or individuals who successfully answer correctly or complete tasks in English. However, it is essential to remember that games should be chosen carefully according to the students' learning objectives and characteristics. In addition, games should still be related to the learning material so as to produce effective and meaningful learning. Overall, the Teaching English by Using Games approach provides a fun and interactive way for students to learn English, while also developing their social skills, creativity and cooperation in a learning context.

In learning English many methods and techniques can be used, including through:

1. Story Telling
2. Role Play
3. Art and Crafts
4. Games
5. Show and Tell
6. Music and Movement (Motion and Song)

Where including singing (Singing) English language learning by using games (games as media). The student learning process becomes more interactive, there is an element of AI (artificial Intelligence) or artificial intelligence in the game media, there will be two-way communication where questions appear randomly on the computer screen and students answer these questions. With the higher computer programming on AI, the games that are made can be more complex tailored to the students' level of ability. An example is a simulation game. The amount of teaching and learning time can be reduced With game media, the teacher does not need to spend a lot of time explaining the material. With game media, students can train themselves by interacting with game media about the material they want to learn. The quality of student learning can be improved In addition to being more efficient in the teaching and learning process as described above, game media can help students absorb the subject matter more deeply and completely.

This is because game media is more interesting because there are visual and audio elements but also interactive which allows students to interact with game programs about a subject. An example is a quiz game. - The learning process can occur anywhere and anytime The rapid development of technology allows students today to have a laptop at a low price. This device has the advantage of being portable and can be used anytime. Game media is usually in the form of interactive CDs that can be used at any time. So that game media as learning media can be used anytime and anywhere. - Students' positive attitudes towards learning materials and towards the learning process itself can be improved With the media, the teaching and learning process becomes more interesting. This can increase students' love and appreciation for science and the knowledge-seeking process. - The role of the teacher can change in a more positive and productive direction First, teachers do not need to repeat their explanations when the media is used in learning. Second, by reducing verbal descriptions, teachers can pay more attention to other aspects of learning. Third, the teacher's role is no longer just "teacher", but also consultant, advisor, or learning manager.

Teaching English by Using Stories

Learning English can be done in various ways, one of which is by reading short stories in English. By reading sentence by sentence English but which is still easy to understand will greatly help us in understanding the English story. Teaching English by Using Stories is an English learning approach that integrates stories or narratives as an effective tool in teaching and learning language. It takes advantage of the natural appeal and engagement that stories have to help students, especially young children, understand and develop language skills. This approach involves using stories of various types, such as fairy tales, fables, legends, and short stories, to teach language elements such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, as well as reading

comprehension. The use of stories in English language teaching provides several advantages. First, stories have an emotional appeal that can motivate students to learn the language with enthusiasm. Second, stories present language in a meaningful and natural context, so that students can understand how language is used in everyday situations. Third, through stories, students can learn vocabulary and grammar contextually, making them easier to remember and apply in real communication.

In this approach, teachers can use various strategies such as reading the story with expression, role-playing to bring the characters in the story to life, and engaging students in story-related discussions or activities. This approach can also be combined with creative elements such as images, audio or video to make the learning experience more interesting. It is important to choose stories that are appropriate for students' age level and language ability. In addition, the stories selected should have positive moral or learning messages so that students can respond and reflect on the content of the story more deeply. Overall, Teaching English by Using Stories is an effective learning method in building students' English language skills, developing cultural understanding, and stimulating their imagination and creativity through interesting storylines.

The steps for implementing English learning through storytelling are as follows:

1. Prepare media and props and if necessary a teacher must memorize the story first.
2. Create an atmosphere that is fun, and comfortable and makes children curious about the stories we will read.
3. Before telling the story, make an agreement with the child. No one should ask questions before Mom finishes the story. If there are children who want to ask, please postpone it.
4. Now read the story with enthusiasm and as interesting as possible after finishing reading the story, ask the children to repeat what we told them and then if anyone asks, they are welcome.

CONCLUSION

In this study it can be concluded that English language skills have an important role in the modern era, especially for early childhood who are experiencing a sensitive period to learning. The potential of children in this period allows for a more effective introduction to various aspects of language before the age of 8, where brain development reaches its peak. Taking advantage of this period, educators and teachers need to come up with learning strategies that can increase enthusiasm and motivation for learning, especially in the context of English language teaching. The research also underscores the importance of continuous learning through listening and recording words in everyday life, as well as understanding language as verbal and nonverbal symbols that develop through continuous exposure. In conclusion, interesting and fun learning approaches such as the TPR Method, stories and songs are instrumental in increasing children's interest in learning English, according to their preferences and needs. This research has a significant contribution in illustrating the importance of English language skills for early childhood in the modern era. Highlighting the sensitive period of child development, the research provides valuable insights for educators, parents and stakeholders in designing appropriate learning approaches. The finding that the introduction of language aspects should occur before children

reach 8 years of age provides a basis for the development of more focused and relevant learning strategies. In this context, it is recommended to develop interesting learning materials and utilize learning methods such as TPR, stories and songs to increase children's engagement. Close collaboration between educators and parents also emerged as an important suggestion, while utilizing children's everyday environment as an effective learning tool. By implementing these findings and suggestions, we can ensure that English language teaching for early childhood not only becomes more meaningful but also triggers a strong interest and passion for learning early on.

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